Graphite ore

4223. SHRI PASUMPON THA KIRUTTINAN: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any decision on mining and processing of graphite ore available at Sivagangai in Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the total quantity of graphite ore available at Sivagangai and the total area in which the ore is available;

(d) whether some foreign countries like West Germany and some foreign banks are interested to invest on this project;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the reasons for the delay in starting the mining process and setting of industries using Sivagangai graphite?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) and (b) Tamil Nadu Minerals Limited (TAMIN), an undertaking of the State Government of Tamil Nadu, has been granted a mining lease for graphite in Pudupatti etc. villages of Sivanganga taluk of Pasumpon Thevar Thirumagan district of Tamil Nadu for a period of 20 years from 1987. TAMIN has planned to set up at Sivaganga a 100 per cent Export Oriented Graphite Beneficiation Unit with a capacity of 9240 tonnes of graphite concentrates at a capital investment of about Rs. 15 crores.

(c) The total recoverable reserves of graphite in the area leased out to TAMIN covering 242.5 hectares is about a lakh tonnes analysing 10-40 per cent carbon. The total area of mineralisation is reported to extend for a strike length of 5.2 km. and width of 150 metres.

(d) to (f) The Graphite Beneficiation Plant of TAMIN was orginally designed by M/s. Humboldt Wedag of West Germany. Subsequently, M/s. Engineers India Limited were engaged for this project. The plant is yet to commence production.

Exploitation of granite deposits

4224. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that rich granite deposits have been located in Rajupalem Lakshmipuram areas in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) whether it is also a fact that some Indian as well as foreign industrialists visited the area to strike a deal for the exploitation of the granite deposits;

(c) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(d) whether any of Indian/foreign industrialist has been permitted to exploit the granite deposits; if so, what are the terms and conditions, if any, laid down for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) to (d) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Reserves of minerals in Madhya Pradesh

4225. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in Madhya Pradesh thousands of hectares of land containing minerals has been reserved exclusively for public sector undertakings of the Central and State Governments;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Public Sector Usdertakings have not acquired or used vast areas containing minerals in the State for the last many years;

(c) if so, whether Government propose to auction or lease such areas to Private Sector in the near future; and

(d) if not, the reasoss therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) Large areas of lands containing Limestone, Dolomite, Manganese and Bauxite reserves have been reserved in Madhya Pradesh for exploitation through public sector undertakings.

(b) to (d) Public Sector Undertakings have large areas under mining leases which they are mining at present. In respect of other areas not covered by such mining leases, the Government of Madhya Pradesh has sent proposals for dereservation of such areas which are currently under consideration of the Central Government. After dereservation of such areas, the private enterpreneurs will be able to obtain mining leases.

Marble Reserves in Rajasthan

4226. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to make use of the high marble reserves in Rajasthan which is 99 per cent of the total reserves in the country; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) and (b) Marble is a minor mineral and hence development thereof is the concern of the State Governments. Mining of marble is mainly taken up in the private sector.

At present the Central Government have no such proposal under ist consideration for making use of the marble reserves in Rajasthan.

Transfer of Chrome Plant

4227. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government of Orissa has transferred chrome plant of Orissa Mining Corporation to Tata Undertaking last year;

(b) whether concessions were given by the State Government to Tata Unit in the deal; and

(c) what were the reasons for the said chrome plant being handed over to Tatas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(a) and (c) According to information received from the Government of Orissa, the State Government agreed to recommend the renewal of Sukinda chromite mining lease in favour of Tata Iron and Steel Company Limited (TISCO) to Government of India when it becomes due as per the Acts & Rules. The State Government has also informed that heavy accumulated losses and the poor likelihood of matters improving in the near future persuaded them to seek alternative ways of running the plant, and of the parties contacted, TISCO alone had come up with a concrete proposal which was for out-right sale of the plant and machinery.

Production of Zinc and Lead Metals

4228. DR. SANJAYA SINH: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that present indigenous production of Zinc and lead metals is not sufficient to meet the demand;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what steps Government propose to take to increase the production of Zinc and lead metals in the country;

(d) the names of the private sector firms which are engaged in the production of Zinc in the country and what is their total capacity and production at present; and

(e) whether these private sector firms also propose to increase their production; if so, the details thereof?